Morphology

Form and Sign

Content Index

1. Morphology
2. Morpheme
3. Morpheme vs Syllable vs Lexeme
4. Classification of Morphemes
5. Morphological Typology (Across Languages)
6. Word Formation Processes
7. Morphophonemics (Sound + Morphology Interaction)
8. Morphosyntax (Morphology + Sentence Structure)
9. Computational Morphology and NLP Applications

Morphology

- **Definition:** Form and Structure. How structure interacts with sound and with meaning.
- **Etymology:**
  - **Morph** - μορφή (morphé) - form, shape, structure
  - **-logy** - λογία (logía) - the study of, the field of
  - **Morphology** = Form + Study.
- **Unit:** Morpheme.

Morpheme

- Smallest meaningful expression.
- It may be a letter, a syllable, or otherwise.
- **Definition:** Distinctive Meaningful logical Patterned segments of Format.
- **Example:**
  - **Format(Word):** Uniform
  - **Morphemes:** uni, form
  - **Meaning:** Uni = One; form = Shape

Difference From: Syllable, Lexeme

- **Syllable:** Sound / Pronunciation.
- **Lexeme:** Word Identity (abstract dictionary form), Base Form + Inflectional Forms
- **Morpheme:** Meaning Construction.
- **Word:** faster
- **Syllables:** 2 → fas-ter
- **Lexeme:** FAST = fast, faster, fastest
- **Morphemes:** 2 → fast + -er

Comparison: Morphemes, Syllables, Lexeme

WORD	Morphemes	Syllables	Lexeme
Cats	2 → cat (animal) + -s (plural meaning)	1→ cats /kæts/	CAT (includes: cat, cats)
Replaying	3 → re (again) + play (root) + -ing (continuous)	3 → re-play-ing	PLAY (covers: play, plays, played, playing)
unbelievable	3 → un (not) + believe (root) + -able (capable of being)	5 → un-be-lie-va-ble	UNBELIEVABLE (separate from BELIEVE because derivation changed meaning + word class)

Classification of Morphemes

BASICS	TYPES	EXAMPLES
Independence	- Free - Bound	- Book, run, happy - Un-, re-, -s, -ing, -ness
Meaning	- Lexical - Grammatical	- Cat, go, big, water - In, on, the, and, -s, -ed
Function in Word Formation	- Inflectional - Derivational	- -s, -ed, -ing - -er, re-, -ful, -ly, -al
Expression	- Segmental - Supra-segmental	- Cat, go, -s, -ed, un-, re- - Record(N) Vs record(V) stress shift
Historical change	- Suppletive	- Man > men, go > went